

REMARKS

The specification has been amended consistent with the drawings to address the objection in paragraph 1 of the Office Action. Claims 12,13 and 16 have been amended as requested in paragraph 2 of the Office Action.

The §112 rejections are moot, as the language that caused the rejection, which was previously inserted into claim 1 in the previous amendment, has been removed in favor of a different amendment that addresses the same issue. Support for the present amendment to claim 1 can be found in the specification starting on page 5 line 7.

The Examiner still cites Chaplain against claim 1 to support a rejection for anticipation. Claim 1 has been differently amended to indicate that the seal must be activated by a force applied through one of the bodies in which it is mounted to sealingly span the annular space. It also has opposed ends compressed in a direction aligned with its longitudinal axis. The Chaplain reference bows the seal significantly to the point where it is not compressed in a direction along its longitudinal axis. For this reason, it does not need a further force to span the annular gap when the other tubular is inserted. Applicant previously argued that the Chaplain seal by virtue of significant bending could not meet the requirement of claim 1 for compression in a direction along the longitudinal axis. The further modification to claim 1 makes this previous distinction more clear. By being compressed in a direction substantially aligned with the longitudinal axis, the seal needs activation to span the annular gap for sealing. Chaplain, a low pressure application, is self-energizing when the other tubular is advanced to shoulder 10. It needs no activation, but then again it only holds water pressure typically seen in irrigation systems or water supply systems as stated in column 1 lines 10-23.

Claims 6 and 15 have been amended to state that the beveled sealing surface spans the annular space. Heinze's surface 12b, relied upon by the Examiner does not do this. Rather surface 12b is inside a groove in the body that retains the seal. Surface 12f spans the annular space and is flat.

Claim 11 is rejected as anticipated in view of Fontenot USP 5,184,681. The Examiner takes the position that this reference shows compression of the seal in the direction of the longitudinal axis where the compression is due to an interference fit in the tubular that retains the seal. While the Examiner's position tracks the language of claim 11, the disclosure of Fontenot comes up short. The Examiner relies on Figure 3 and points to seal 58 positioned between support rings 67 and 69. The specification simply says at Column 3 Lines 32-34,

"Upper support ring 67 and lower support ring 69 are positioned above and below packer 58 within housing 52 as shown."

The words interference, compress or compressed do not even appear in the reference. There are no dimensions recited in the drawings or in the specification from which the Examiner could conclude that this reference teaches longitudinal compression from an interference fit. The entire description of Figure 3 is but a single paragraph in Column 3 Lines 19-42. There is simply no teaching there that supports the Examiner's conclusion when applying the reference. It is respectfully submitted that that claim 11 is allowable over the Fontenot reference.

It is submitted that all the claims are in condition for allowance and such action is requested.



Respectfully submitted,

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